



BELLS GARDENS UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2021 – KEY CHANGES TO PLANS ON YOUR ESTATE

We have made changes to our proposals to build new homes on Bells Gardens Estate. We have listened to your feedback on our plans to provide new council homes in the area and we have made some changes to the development plans to reflect what you have told us.

We are building 2,500 new council homes across the borough by the middle of next year. This is a big goal, but we are on target and it is crucial if we're going to tackle the housing crisis and ensure that our residents have good quality homes which they can be proud of, now and in the future.

To meet this objective we are proposing to build new homes, a retail unit, a new community centre and an improved amenity space. You can find further information about the Bells Gardens development on our website: www.southwark.gov.uk/bells-gardens

New proposals for Bells Gardens

The original proposal was a mixed tenure development featuring a commercial unit, new homes for social rent and some for private sale. There were to be three separate blocks at nine, seven and five storeys, with 32 homes for private sale in order to fund the new community centre and the rest of the project. We have listened to your feedback on these proposals and we have been

working hard to find a reasonable compromise between our need to provide more council homes and the views of residents who have concerns about this project.

Therefore, we are proposing the following changes:

- 1) We will remove the private sale element of this project completely. This will become a 100% council home scheme.
- 2) We will reduce height of these buildings, removing three storeys in total. This will mean that the site will have three separate blocks, at seven, six and five storeys.
- 3) Despite the reduction in height, we will increase the number of genuinely affordable, council-rent homes from 65 to 83.

4) The increase in new council homes would meet the current housing need on Bells Gardens Estate. This means that when the homes are ready to let, anyone on the estate who is waiting for new homes will be able to apply to stay on the estate in a home that meets their needs.

Current housing need on estate	Number of households	Met by new blocks?
1 bed	16	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2 bed	8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3 bed	8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4 bed	4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- 5) These new homes will include:
 - 21 x one-bedroom
 - 40 x two-bedroom
 - 18 x three-bedroom
 - 4 x four-bedroom
 - These include five wheelchair accessible disabled flats

- 6) Of the new homes:
 - At least 50% would be offered to existing local tenants who are in housing need, so they can continue to live near family, friends, and the services they currently use.
 - 50% would be allocated to people on our wider housing waiting list.

These are significant changes to this scheme, but all of the other key benefits remain including:

- A linear park between the new blocks, retention of the existing trees and new planting
- A new community centre with a small outdoor terrace
- Re-provision of a Multi-Use Games Area and a new play area

Bells Gardens planning application – consultation extended



We have made changes to the planning application that we originally submitted for the development to reflect the changes outlined above. We will be re-opening the formal planning consultation period, and all residents will have a chance to formally comment on proposals.

You should shortly be receiving a copy of the formal consultation documents by post. There will be a 21 day period in which you comment on the proposals. You can comment on the live application online using this link, or scan the QR code. [https://planning.southwark.gov.uk/online-](https://planning.southwark.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=QQQA8XKB03Q00)

[applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=QQQA8XKB03Q00](https://planning.southwark.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=QQQA8XKB03Q00)

The planning application reference is **21/AP/1077**.

The planning application will be going to planning committee on **Tuesday 2 November 2021**. We will write to you again after the committee to let you know the outcome of the decision.

Your overall feedback

Throughout this process, we have been keen to ensure we are responding to your views and concerns. Since preparing our original proposals and designs, we have been continuing conversation by carrying out telephone questionnaires with residents on Bells Gardens Estate. Thank you to all those who have taken part in the telephone surveys, your input and feedback is extremely valuable.

We have analysed the the results from these surveys, and our key findings are:

- 96% of respondents were aware of the development proposals
- 78% of respondents were aware that it would be a mixed tenure development
- 35% of respondents knew that at least 50% of the new council homes would be offered to residents in housing need
- 17% of respondents knew that there would be an overall increase in play space on the estate once the development was complete
- 9% of respondents agreed that the community centre is in need of modernisation
- 27% of respondents knew that the works would be phased so that residents would always have access to the community centre
- 28% of respondents knew that a linear park would be provided as part of the development

There were a few questions and areas of concern which came up a number of times during our telephone conversations. These questions are outlined below, along with our responses. If you raised a specific concern which hasn't been answered below, the issue has been passed onto your Resident Services Officer, Odili Obi who you can contact by emailing Odili.Obi@southwark.gov.uk or calling 0207 525 7395.

Your questions and issues answered

Many residents we spoke to had concerns around the lack of parking on the estate, the loss of trees and green space.

As part of the development we would be providing a new linear park between the blocks, with tree planting and landscaping. We would be providing 13 car parking spaces as part of the development. Five of these would be for wheelchair user occupants and eight would be for community centre visitors.

Many of you mentioned concerns about overcrowding, both in your own homes and across the estate.

As part of our local lettings policy, at least 50% of the new homes built here would be offered to local tenants in housing need in the immediate area, alleviating overcrowding on the estate.

Many of you said that activities for younger people are lacking and the green space provides opportunities for children to play out

We would be replacing the children's playground on the estate and the new MUGA will meet Sports England standards and be suitable for people of all ages to enjoy.

A number of you also raised questions about what would happen with the MUGA both during and after development.

Residents would need to make other arrangements during construction to access a MUGA, such as visits to local parks or neighbouring estates. We would get in touch nearer the time to let you know about alternative facilities in the area.

A number of you also spoke to us about pest control and repairs issues, and some of you also mentioned some gardening referrals and ASB issues.

We will be taking these discussions forwards and will come up with a set of proposals to address these issues.

Many of your raised concerns about bin storage, waste management and broader estate improvements.

We will be taking these discussions forward and we will speak to you in more detail about ways we can improve these issues.

A general summary of how we responded to your previous feedback in our development plans is below:

YOU SAID:	WE DID:
The green space and as many trees as possible should be retained.	The site layout maximises the green space and retention of trees, and places buildings within the estate to minimise the impact on green space.
The development should provide improvements to the wider estate, e.g. improving the play space, areas outside Angelina House, Edwin House and Neville Close.	The development boundary (red line) has been extended to include areas recommended by the project group and offer amenity improvement to the wider estate.
Private courtyards/private communal gardens for the new blocks should be avoided. All green spaces should be open and accessible to the whole community.	The spaces between blocks will be accessible to the whole community, there will be no private courtyards.
Blocks should be varied in height and avoid overshadowing.	Heights of blocks range from five to seven storeys with the five-storey block located to the south. This is down from nine storeys in the current proposal
The community centre should be located at the entrance to the estate and also be accessible for the residents.	The community centre is located in Block C and has an entrance from Buller Close, and from the rest of the estate.
The community centre should have flexible spaces for informal working and interacting	The lobby space is designed as a flexible area to host events, offer informal work space or as an extension to other event spaces.
Phasing should be considered to minimise the disruption to the estate.	Block C can be built first to deliver the new community centre before demolishing the existing one. Block A and B will be delivered in Phase 2.

Bells Gardens development - Landscape Plan



Existing Tree



Proposed Tree



Primary footway (Flag paving)



Secondary footway (Brick paving)



Community garden (Brick paving)



Car park and Access



Play trail



Hedge and buffer planting



Lawn



Ornamental planting

Wider estate improvements

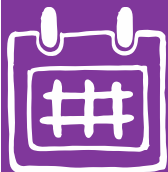
We would be carrying out wider estate improvements as part of this development. Some of these improvements are:

- Accessible and clear pedestrian routes and sightlines
- Re-provision of play spaces, accessible for all ages and abilities
- Good quality paving materials throughout, chosen to harmonise with the building materials
- Existing trees retained where possible
- New hedge/shrub planting to create private space and screening to residential ground floor flats

Many of you have raised suggestions about improving bin storage, waste management and broader estate improvements, and we will be taking these discussions forward.



Community Centre model



TIMELINE

Online public consultation	Autumn 2020
Planning application submitted	Spring 2021
Planning application updated	Autumn 2021
Additional consultation period	Sep - Oct 2021
Planning decision expected	November 2021
Works expected to start	Spring 2022
Phase 1 expected to complete	Summer 2024*
Phase 2 expected to complete	Summer 2026*

*These dates are indicative and will be finalised after a contractor is appointed

More time to have your say

The formal planning consultation period for this development will soon be re-opened to allow the public to comment on the updated proposals.

You should shortly be receiving a copy of the formal consultation documents by post. There will be a 21 day period in which you comment on the proposals. You can comment on the live application online using this link, or scan the QR code.

<https://planning.southwark.gov.uk/online->

[applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=QQQA8XKB03Q00](https://planning.southwark.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=QQQA8XKB03Q00)

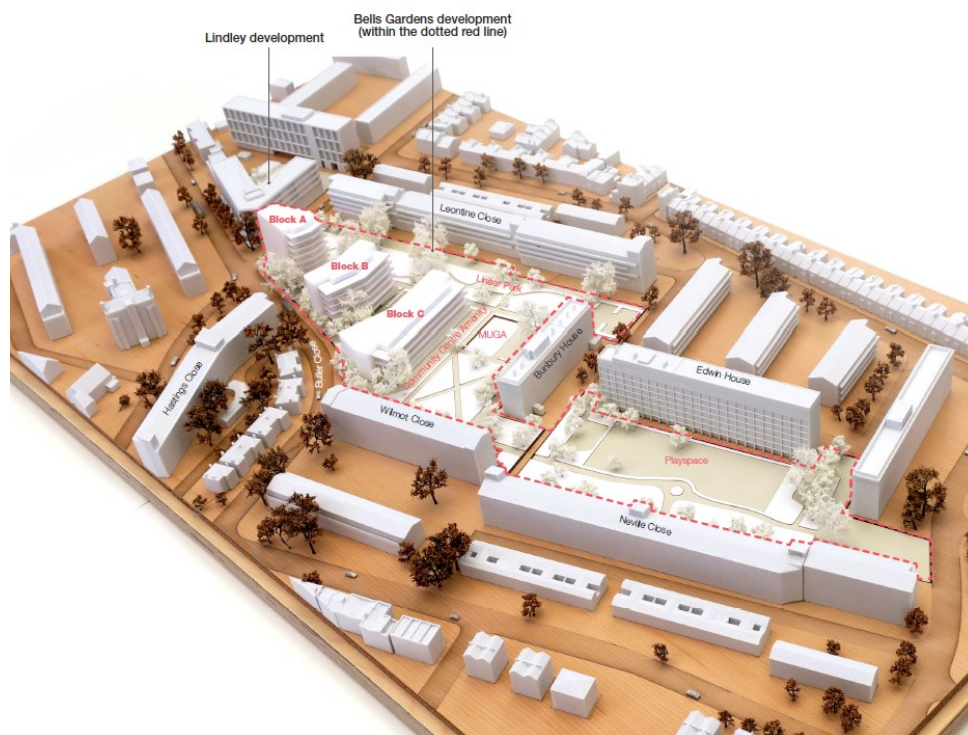


The planning application reference is **21/AP/1077**.

The planning application will be going to planning committee on **Tuesday 2 November 2021**. We will write to you again after the committee to let you know the outcome of the decision.

Bells Gardens – overview together with Lindley estate development

The model below shows the location of the new build proposals at Bells Gardens and Lindley Estates in relation to the existing blocks.



CONTACTS

Thandi Gonzales, Project Manager: 0207 525 0118

Eishrhat Islam, Project Officer: 0207 525 7360

Email: Newhomesbells.lindley@southwark.gov.uk

For a printed copy of the consultation boards, or for further support, please telephone or email Rahala.Khalida@southwark.gov.uk / 0207 525 0866

The New Homes programme

You can find frequently asked questions about our New Homes Programme on our website: <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/housing/new-council-homes/new-council-homes-faqs>